

Activity 1: The Perils of Neutrality

Student Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Your teacher has assigned you to be part of a group of three for a game of “Contraband.” Learn the following rules before playing the game in class.

Contraband: A Game of War and Commerce in the 1790s

Overview: It is 1793, and war has broken out between Great Britain and France. The United States is officially neutral in this conflict, but hopes to trade with both sides. While the British and French both very much want to trade with the United States, each side wants to prevent the Americans from trading with its enemy.

What You Will Need to Play: This game is designed for three players (a fourth may play if the optional Barbary Pirate rule is used). Aside from the game board and game pieces, you will need a six-sided die.

Object of the Game: The player with the most points at the end of the game is the winner. The U.S. Player receives a point for every one of its merchant ships that reaches its intended destination. The British Player earns one point for every U.S. merchant ship that safely reaches Great Britain, and one for every U.S. merchant ship that is prevented from reaching France or France’s Caribbean colonies. The French Player earns one point for every U.S. merchant ship that reaches France (or France’s Caribbean colonies), and one point for every U.S. merchant ship that is prevented from reaching Great Britain.

The Board: The game board represents the North Atlantic region. On the lower left-hand side of the map is the East Coast of the United States. Europe is near the upper right-hand corner, while the Caribbean Islands are at the bottom center of the map. A map legend appears in the upper-left-hand corner, and a movement table (explained below) is near the lower-right-hand corner.

The board is divided into square spaces that limit the movement of game pieces. Each piece on the board can move a certain number of spaces per turn, as will be further explained below. Some spaces have letters in them, which indicates that they represent U.S., British, or French territorial waters (“A” for U.S., “E” for British, and “F” for French). British and French Squadrons (see below) are limited in which of these spaces they can enter. The three spaces on the U.S. East Coast marked with a circle represent the most important American ports in the 1790s—the northernmost port represents New York and Boston, the middle one Baltimore and Philadelphia, and the third Charleston and Savannah.

Game Pieces: There are four different types of game pieces—

U.S. Merchant Ship (British-bound): These pieces have a drawing of a ship on a light blue background on one side, and a British flag on the other. These represent American schooners filled with goods bound for ports in Great Britain. These should be placed on the board with the flag side down, so that the British and French players do not know at first whether any particular merchant ship is headed for a British or a French port. U.S. merchant ships may move horizontally, vertically, or diagonally on the game board. They may enter any space (aside, obviously, from those that are made up only of land), including those marked with an “E” or an “F” (that is, British and French territorial waters).

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U.S. Merchant Ship (French-bound): These are exactly the same as the British-bound merchant ships described above, but have a French flag on one side. These represent American schooners engaged in trade with France and its Caribbean colonies. These should also be placed on the map flag side down to conceal their destination. As above, they may move horizontally, vertically, or diagonally on the game board, and may enter any space that is not made up entirely of land.

French Squadron: These two pieces have a drawing of a warship on a white background with a blue border (the other side is blank). These represent squadrons of French warships assigned to protecting France's trade with the United States, and stopping American trade with Great Britain. They may move horizontally or vertically on the game board, but not diagonally. They may not enter any space marked with an "A" or an "E" (that is, they may not enter American or British territorial waters), or any space containing a British Squadron.

British Squadron: These are exactly the same as French Squadrons, but have a red border instead of a blue one. There are also four of them, reflecting the fact that the Royal Navy was much larger than the French during this period. These pieces represent groups of British warships assigned to protecting Britain's trade with the United States, and stopping American trade with France and its Caribbean colonies. Like French Squadrons, they may move horizontally or vertically on the game board, but not diagonally. They may not enter any space marked with an "A" or an "F" (American or French territorial waters), or any space containing a French Squadron.

Sequence of Play: The French Player begins by placing his or her Squadrons in French territorial waters (that is, in any space marked with an "F," including those in the Caribbean). The British Player follows, placing his or her Squadrons in British territorial waters (any space marked with an "E").

Next the U.S. Player selects two of his or her merchant ships. They may be either French-bound or British-bound (or one of each), but the choice is known only to the U.S. Player, who places them ship-side-up (flag-side-down) in any of the three American ports (that is, spaces marked with a circle). Both may be placed in the same, or in separate ports, at the player's discretion. **Note:** Even though there are twenty U.S. merchant ship pieces available, only ten will be used in any given game.

The U.S. Player then rolls a die for each of his or her merchant ships on the board. The result is compared with the movement chart near the lower-left-hand corner of the board to determine the number of spaces that ship is allowed to move this turn (between one and four). A separate die roll is made for each ship, and then the U.S. Player has the option of moving that ship in any direction, up to a maximum distance of the number determined by the die roll. Note that the U.S. Player is not required to move any of his or her merchant ships—if British or French Squadrons are lurking close by, it might be a better strategy to keep them in port for a while!

If a U.S. merchant ship enters a space containing a British or French Squadron, the player who owns that Squadron has the option of searching the ship. If this occurs, the merchant ship immediately ends its movement, even if the die roll indicated that it could move further. The piece is then flipped to its flag side, so that all players may see whether the ship is bound for a British or a French port. If it is a British Squadron that is doing the searching, and the ship is headed for a British port, the merchant ship is immediately flipped back over again, and is allowed to proceed on its way. However, if the merchant ship is bound for a French port, it is considered to be intercepted and removed from the board. The British Player receives one point for successfully preventing goods from reaching the enemy. The same is true in the reverse case—that is, a French Squadron is doing the searching, and the merchant ship

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being searched is bound for a British port. In this instance, of course, it is the French Player that receives the point.

As soon as a French-bound U.S. merchant ship enters French territorial waters (that is, any space marked with an “F,” which includes France’s Caribbean colonies), it is assumed to have successfully reached its destination. It is removed from the board, and the U.S. and French Players each receive one point. The same occurs if a British-bound U.S. merchant ship enters British territorial waters (that is, any space marked with an “E”)—the piece is taken off the board, and the U.S. and British Players each receive one point.

After the U.S. Player is finished moving his or her merchant ships, the French Player may move his or her Squadrons, followed by the British Player. The same rules for movement apply here as they do for U.S. merchant ships, with the following exceptions:

- 1) British Squadrons may not enter French territorial waters (and vice versa).
- 2) British Squadrons may not enter any space already occupied by a French Squadron (and vice versa).
- 3) Neither British nor French Squadrons may enter U.S. territorial waters.
- 4) Neither British nor French Squadrons may move diagonally on the board.

If a British or French Squadron enters a space occupied by a U.S. merchant ship, the player who owns that Squadron has the option of searching that ship, according to the procedure described above. If there is more than one U.S. merchant ship in the space, only one may be searched; the player who owns the Squadron must choose which one.

If the British or French Player chooses to have one of its Squadrons search a U.S. merchant ship in a space that it has entered, that Squadron must end its movement, even if the die roll indicated that it could move further.

After the British and French Players have completed their moves, the turn ends. A new turn begins with the U.S. Player selecting two more merchant ships according to the procedure explained above. The game continues in this way until Turn 6, when the U.S. Player—having already placed ten merchant ships on the board—receives no more merchant ships.

Ending the Game: The game ends at the end of any U.S. Player’s move after Turn 5 in which there are no U.S. merchant ships on the high seas (that is, in spaces other than U.S. ports or U.S. territorial waters). At this point each player tallies his or her points, and the player with the most is declared the winner.

Barbary Pirates (optional): If a fourth player is available, this person might take on the role of the Barbary pirates, who operated out of North African bases to prey on American shipping on the Atlantic. In the game, the Barbary Player has no territorial waters, and only one piece—a Corsair, with a gray background and a black border. The Corsair begins the game in the space with the “W” (part of “20° W”), along the right-hand side of the map. The Barbary Player does not engage in trade; any points that he or she receives comes from intercepting U.S. merchant ships, without regard to whether that ship is bound for French or British ports. The Barbary Player moves his or her Corsair last; that is, after the British Player. The Corsair moves like a merchant ship—that is, it can move diagonally, as well as horizontally and vertically—and uses the same movement chart as all of the other game pieces. Like a French or British Squadron, it is prohibited from entering any other player’s territorial waters. If it

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moves into a space occupied by a U.S. merchant ship, the merchant ship is immediately removed from the board, and the Barbary Player receives one point. If a French or British Squadron moves into a space occupied by the Corsair, the Corsair is immediately removed from the board. However, on the Barbary Player's next turn the Corsair is replaced on the "W" space along the right-hand side of the map.

Naval Combat (optional): For an added level of realism, players might consider allowing British and French Squadrons to fight one another (they were at war, after all). Naval combat in the game would not represent major battles, but rather lesser engagements involving small numbers of ships on each side.

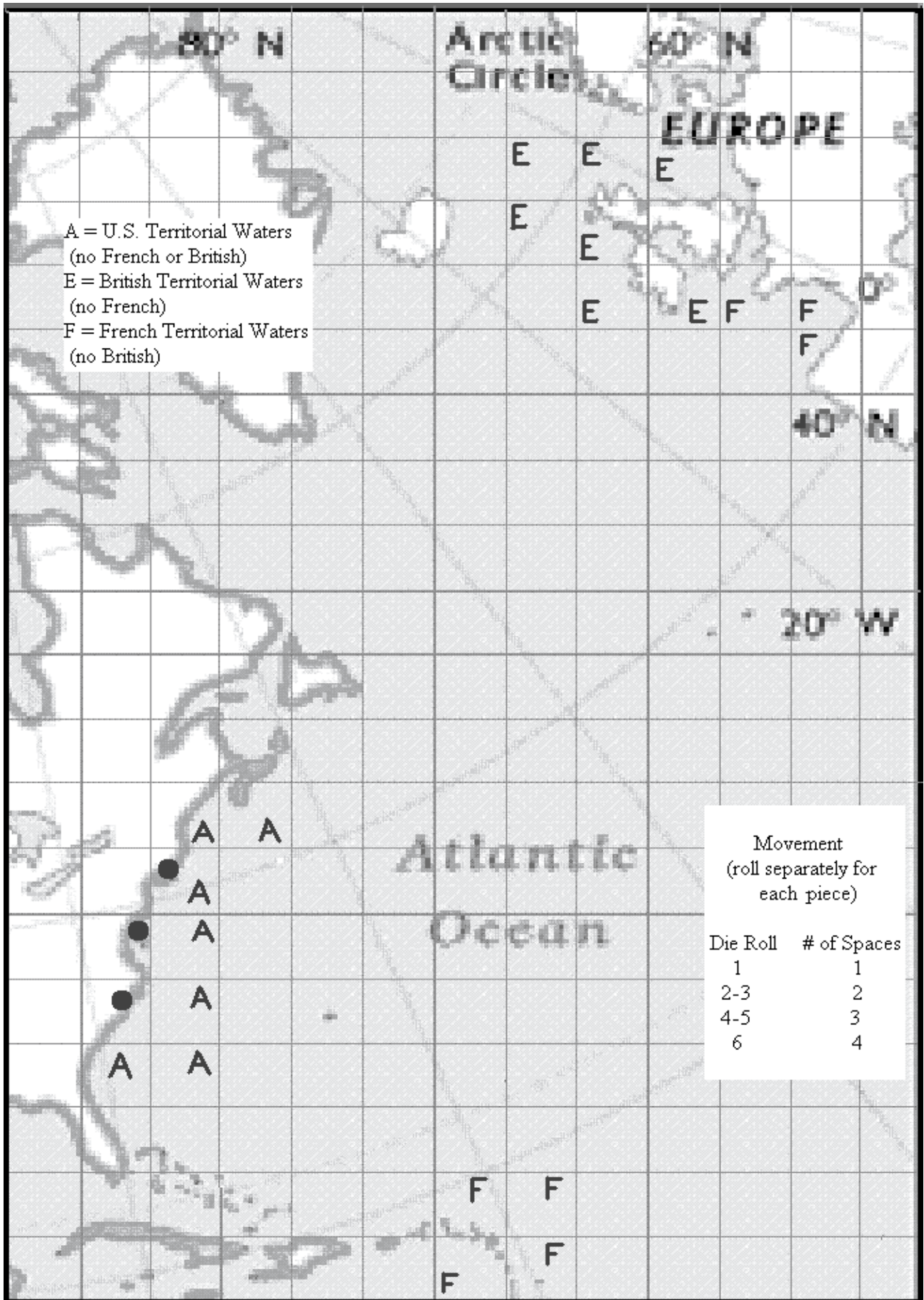
If this option is used, the French Player may, during his or her turn, move Squadrons into spaces occupied by British Squadrons, and vice versa. Combat takes place after all of the attacking player's moves have been completed; this means that a player may attempt to move more than one Squadron into an enemy-occupied space before the fighting actually begins. Each turn proceeds, then, according to the following sequence of play:

1. The U.S. Player places new merchant ships (at least during Turns 1 through 5), and then moves his or her merchant ships.
2. The French Player moves his or her Squadrons.
3. Once the French Player is done moving, combat takes place in any spaces that contain both French and British Squadrons, and the results of the battle are implemented (see below).
4. The British player moves his or her Squadrons.
5. Once the British Player is done moving, combat takes place in any spaces that contain both French and British Squadrons, and the results of the battle are implemented (see below).
6. (optional) The Barbary Player moves his or her Corsair.

To resolve combat, each player rolls the die once for each of his or her Squadron that is involved in the battle. If a player rolls more than one die (because he or she has more than one Squadron in the fight), then the results of the die rolls are added together. The player with the higher die roll (or total die rolls, if more than one Squadron is involved on a side) wins. The player that loses must remove one of his or her Squadrons from the board, and, if that player had more than one Squadron involved in the battle, must move the remaining Squadrons to any neighboring space. After combat is finished, no space on the board should contain both French and British Squadrons.

Any Squadron that is removed from the board as a result of combat is returned to the board at the beginning of the owning player's next turn. The Squadron may be placed in any of the owning player's territorial waters. Exception: if the French Player loses a Squadron as a result of defeat in battle, on the French Player's next turn he or she may only replace that Squadron in his or her territorial waters around France. In other words, it may not be placed in the Caribbean. This reflects the fact that naval losses in the Atlantic would have been replaced by ships reassigned from stations elsewhere in the world, or by newly-built vessels.

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Game Pieces for “Contraband”

Teacher Directions: For best results, print this page on light cardstock, and then cut out the pieces below. For U.S. merchant ships the pieces should be folded vertically and glued shut, so that the image of the ship appears on one side of the piece, and the image of the British or French flag appears on the other side.

U.S. Merchant Ships (British-bound)



U.S. Merchant Ships (French-bound)



French Squadrons



British Squadrons



Barbary Corsair (optional)



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Activity #1: The Perils of Neutrality

Directions: After you have finished your game of “Contraband,” answer the following questions as a group.

Question	Answer
Who won the game, and why do you think it worked out this way?	
Did the U.S. Player choose to trade with one side more than the other? If so, with which one, and why?	
Did the U.S. Player tend to use any of its ports more than the others? If so, which one, and why?	
Did the U.S. Player decide at any time to keep his or her merchant ships in port, or in U.S. territorial waters? If so, when and why?	
Did the British or French players at any time decide <i>not</i> to inspect a U.S. merchant ship when he or she had the chance? If so, when and why?	
How would the game have been different if the United States had a Squadron like that of the British and French?	

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<p>If the Barbary Pirate option was used, what effect did this have on the game?</p>	
<p>If the Naval Combat option was used, what effect did this have on the game?</p>	

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Activity #1: The Perils of Neutrality

Directions: Read the document below, answering the questions that follow to guide your reading.

George Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality, April 22, 1793:

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.com/library/index.asp?document=622>

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

A PROCLAMATION

Whereas it appears that a state of war exists between Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain, and the United Netherlands, of the one part, and France on the other; and the duty and interest of the United States require, that they should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent Powers;

I have therefore thought fit by these presents to declare the disposition of the United States to observe the conduct aforesaid towards those Powers respectfully; and to exhort and warn the citizens of the United States carefully to avoid all acts and proceedings whatsoever, which may in any manner tend to contravene such disposition.

And I do hereby also make known, that whatsoever of the citizens of the United States shall render himself liable to punishment or forfeiture under the law of nations, by committing, aiding, or abetting hostilities against any of the said Powers, or by carrying to any of them those articles which are deemed contraband by the modern usage of nations, will not receive the protection of the United States, against such punishment or forfeiture; and further, that I have given instructions to those officers, to whom it belongs, to cause prosecutions to be instituted against all persons, who shall, within the cognizance of the courts of the United States, violate the law of nations, with respect to the Powers at war, or any of them.

In testimony whereof, I have caused the seal of the United States of America to be affixed to these presents, and signed the same with my hand. Done at the city of Philadelphia, the twenty-second day of April, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the seventeenth.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

April 22, 1793

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Question	Answer
List the belligerents.	
What constitutes “conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers”?	
What constitutes behaviors that would result in “punishment or forfeiture under the law of nations, by committing, aiding, or abetting hostilities”?	
What is the goal of Washington’s proclamation?	